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George A. Hench, University of Michigan.
Eugene Kölbing, Breslau, Germany.
J. Luquiens, Yale University.

The reading of papers was resumed.

13. "A study of Pope's *Imitations of Horace*." By Professor James W. Tupper, of Western University, London, Ont. [Printed in *Publications*, xv, 181 f.]

14. "Germanic elements in *King Horn*." By Professor George H. McKnight, of Ohio State University. [Printed in *Publications*, xv, 221 f.]

15. "The present status of Rhetorical theory." By Dr. Gertrude Buck, of Vassar College. [Printed in *Modern Language Notes*, March, 1900.]

16. "An incident in the *Poema de Fernan Gonzalez*." By Professor C. C. Marden, of the Johns Hopkins University. [Printed in *Revue Hispanique*, VII (1900), p. 22 f.]

The primary object of the paper was to establish the relation between certain portions of the Spanish epic poem and the corresponding chapters of the *Prose Chronicle* of Alfonso the Wise, both of which were written in the thirteenth century. The Count of Castille, Fernan Gonzalez, is one of the most interesting figures in old Spanish literature, and the poem written in his honor contains the earliest known version of many legends of Christian Spain. One of these legends relates how the maiden La Cava was wronged by the Gothic King Roderick, and how her father, Count Julian, avenged his daughter's disgrace by bringing the Arabs into Spain and overthrowing the Gothic monarchy. In another portion of the poem we are told how the vassal, Count Fernan Gonzalez, sold to King Sancho a horse and a hawk; by an ingenious trick, however, the price was made so exorbitant that the king was glad to settle the account by granting independence to Castille. A third legend tells how the same count killed King Sancho of Navarre in battle, and how a French relative of the dead king came into Spain with a large army in order to avenge his kinsman's

death. The invader was slain, however, and his body was sent back to France together with sufficient money to pay the funeral accessories.

Now, this last mentioned story was copied, almost word for word, by Alfonso the Wise when he composed his *Prose Chronicle of the World*, and the same story is preserved, likewise, in a fifteenth-century copy of the original *Poem of Fernan Gonzalez*, though the copyist did not hesitate to alter and expand the original legend. Professor Marden then proceeded to discuss these three versions of the story, showed how the many divergencies had crept in, and, finally, established the date of the original poem.

17. "The curse-idea in Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris*." By Dr. C. A. Eggert, of Chicago, Ill.

18. "Problematical characters in German fiction." By Professor A. B. Faust, of Wesleyan University.

Goethe has defined *problematical natures* as such "who can never master the situation into which they are placed, yet to whom no situation in life is adequate" (for the exercise of their talents). They are persons of great endowments, yet they fail to seize the opportunities that present themselves, and grow resentful because the great opportunity commensurate with their abilities has never arrived. Though generally they have themselves to blame, nevertheless their failure is pathetic, for the ornamental gifts that nature has bestowed upon them are but a weak defense against a cruel fate, or a useless weapon for the performance of a solemn duty. Gifted fools of fortune, elegant misfits, titans (as Jean Paul expresses it) "that would make a cross-bow of the milky-way, yet lack the bow-string to span the distance," they consume their lives in a hopeless struggle against opposing forces. Examples of the problematical character are abundant in all literatures, the one of which Goethe has given such a masterly exposition is Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "the oak planted in a flower-pot," the scholar called upon to avenge a monstrous crime. An instance in recent literature is furnished by the works of Henrik Ibsen, whose dramas seem with problematical personages. It is the purpose of this paper to show that, beginning with the wavering heroes of Goethe's works and extending to the present time, the problematical character has never been absent from German fiction. It has exerted a baneful influence on the works of Jean Paul, Spielhagen, Keller (der grüne Heinrich), Sudermann, and though the type has sometimes been skillfully wrought, the defect lies in its moral deformity, and its proximity to falseness and unreality.

President and Mrs. Seth Low received the members of the Association at their residence, corner of 64th Street and Madison Avenue, on Thursday evening at 9 o'clock.